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Homemaker News
EXCLUSIVE TO STATE EXTENSION EDITORS
U S D A PRESS SERVICE, OFFICE OF INFORMATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE

No. 268 November 1, 1938.

WINTER PLAY SUITS

A play suit for "everyday" wear has become a definite part of a child's wardrobe. Many mothers like to make the play suits rather than purchase the ready-made suits. The experienced shopper has learned, of course, that the heaviest fabrics are not necessarily the warmest. The ability to shut out wind or dampness and hold a layer of air next to the body is what makes a fabric warm. Good play-suit fabrics are flexible and pliable enough not to hamper the movements of the child. Neither will they prickle or irritate the skin at the neck, wrists, and ankles.

Of course a winter play suit must be durable and cleanable. Wool fabrics are satisfactory, but some of them have to be dry-cleaned. Some mothers who feel that washable clothing is preferable for children, use two play suits, one over the other. The outer one is selected for its ability to turn wind, rain, or snow, but the purchaser or maker is careful to see that it is lightweight and washable. The inner suit is selected to add warmth; it possibly is of wool, and can be omitted on milder days.

The Bureau of Home Economics of the U. S. Department of Agriculture has developed several types of warm, roomy, light-weight, easily put on play suits for children. It does not have patterns, but at least one commercial company has embodied the best of the ideas in a practical pattern. For children between 2 and 6 years the bureau recommends the one-piece,

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unbelted, loose-fitting play suits. No matter how active the play, a one-piece outfit will not pull apart at the waist and let in cold as do two-piece suits with waist-length jackets. Another objection to two-piece suits for little children is that extra thickness around the waist is a real hindrance to the stooping that is so much a part of their play. It is especially important to see that ample room is provided so that the wearer will not be hindered in climbing, stooping, and bending. Boxing through the crotch and dart tucks set in both below the waistband and at the side seams in line with the bend of the hips provide the necessary room. Trousers must have extra width and length in the seat, with wide, roomy legs bloused over stretchy knit bands at the ankle. It is a good plan, of course, to allow for some growth in the child.

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